

Recommended Variety List for Southcentral Alaska

HGA-00031

*by Jeff Smeenk, Extension Horticulture Specialist
Agriculture and Horticulture*

Gardening for recreation and for food production is popular in Southcentral Alaska, just as it is in the rest of the world. Although our short, cool growing season and cold soils present gardening challenges, our long day lengths and low pest levels give us gardening opportunities not seen by our counterparts in the rest of the United States.

While many kinds of fruit and vegetables will grow wonderfully in our gardens, not all will. In general, cool season vegetables such as potatoes, carrots and the cabbage family thrive in our gardens, while warm season vegetables such as beans, cucumbers and tomatoes struggle to produce in open, unprotected gardens.

One of the joys of gardening is discovering new varieties that are successful in your garden. Although there are many varieties that are not presented in the following charts that are worthy of your garden effort, the varieties listed have repeatedly proven successful in Southcentral Alaska. The recommendations for the varieties in the charts come from several sources. Many have been trialed by researchers at University of Alaska Fairbank's Matanuska Experiment Farm in Palmer or at the Division of Agriculture's Plant



Material Center in Butte, Alaska. Others have made the list because they are highly recommended by Master Gardeners throughout the Southcentral region.

Since the weather, soil type, nutrient levels and production strategies vary from garden to garden, the yield and maturity information should be used as a relative measure of the variety's production potential. It may perform differently in your garden than where it was originally evaluated. In general, the short season varieties perform better than the long season varieties. The warm season vegetables are much more productive under high or low plastic tunnels.

Extension publication HGA-00134, *16 Easy Steps to Gardening in Alaska*, is a good publication to help get you started in producing some of your own fruits and vegetables.

Garden Vegetables

Vegetable	Variety	Maturity	Yield	Comments
Snap Beans	Contender	Earliest	Heavy	Pods may become splashed with purple
	Provider	Early	Heavy	Good quality
	Strike	Midseason to late	Heavy	Good quality
	Top Crop	Midseason	Moderate	Good quality and dependable
	Royal Burgundy	Midseason	Moderate	Good quality and dependable
Beets	Bolthardy	Intermediate	Heavy	Solid dark red and round; does not go to seed; Gourmet Seeds only
	Ruby Queen	Early	Heavy	Uniformly smooth
	Cylindra	Intermediate	Fair	Long, cylindrical
	Burpee Golden	Intermediate	Fair	Yellow flesh instead of red; round
	Detroit Red	Intermediate	Heavy	Standard, good for processing
	Chiaggo	Intermediate	Fair	Heirloom; flesh with concentric red and white rings
	Touchstone Gold	Intermediate	Heavy	Yellow flesh instead of red, mild flavor
Broccoli	Packman	Early to midseason	Heavy	Medium central heads
	Green Comet	Early	Fair	Large central heads; wholesale only
	Waltham 29	Second earliest	Heavy	Medium central heads, many laterals
	Emperor	Midseason to late	Heavy	Large central heads
Brussels Sprouts	Jade Cross	Early	Heavy	Uniform sized sprouts, good quality
	Prince Marvel	Early	Heavy	Uniform sized sprouts, excellent quality; Vermont Bean Seed Co. (retail); Ball Seed Co. (wholesale)
Cabbage	Early Jersey	Earliest	Good	High quality, pointy heads that burst early
	Early Marvel	Early	Good	Good quality, round heads; all heads mature over a short period; Stokes Seeds
	Emerald Ace	Early	Good	Nice shaped heads; Stokes Seeds
	Hybrid Golden Acre	Early	Good	Fair quality, round heads, long core
	Stonehead	Midseason	Heavy	Firm, uniform heads, long core
	Survivor	Late	Heavy	Good storage keeper
	O-S Cross	Late	Very heavy	Has potential for very large size; Denali Seed Co. (wholesale only)
	Multikeeper	Late	Heavy	Good storage keeper; Stokes Seeds
Carrot	Nantes Coreless	Early	Fair	Medium, cylindrical, sweet, tender, stores well; Farmer Seed & Nursery Co.
	Gold King	Midseason	Heavy	Long, cylindrical, tapered point
	Gold Pak	Midseason to late	Heavy	Long, tapered, commercial type, high quality, needs deep soil
	Nantes Scarlet	Midseason to late	Good	Consistently large
	Royal Chantenay	Late	Very good	Large diameter, large core, fair quality
Cauliflower	Super Snowball	Very early	Very good	Light heads, does not get ricy or purple; Farmer Seed & Nursery Co. (wholesale only)
	Early Snowball	Early	Very good	Medium heavy heads, fair leaf cover
	Snow Crown	Early	Good	Dependable early variety
	Andes	Midseason	Heavy	Self-wrapping type

Vegetable	Variety	Maturity	Yield	Comments
Celery	Utah 52-70	Midseason	Good	Long stalks, dark green
Chives	Nearly all varieties do well	Early	Good	Perennial, onionlike flavor
Cucumber	Slice King Early Pride	Early Midseason	Good Good	Gyneocious, hybrid slicer High quality (slicing)
Kale	Nearly all varieties do well	All	Good	Harvest as baby greens and/or full-sized plants
Kohlrabi	Early Purple Vienna	Early	Good	Substitute for turnip where turnip root maggot control is impossible
	Early White Vienna	Early	Good	Both Viennas keep well into late winter in common storage
Greens	Fordhook Giant Chard	Late	Heavy	Vigorous, large leaf and petiole
	Green Wave Mustard	Very early	Good	Distinct mustard flavor; Stokes Seeds, Denali Seed Co.
	Seven Top Turnip	Early	Good	Use turnip and tops when the root is 1 inch in diameter; Reimer Seeds, Kitchen Garden Seeds, Nature Hills Nursery
	Collards (Vates)	Late	Heavy	Mild mustard flavor
	Bulls Blood Beets	Early	Good	Beautiful dark red leaves with mild flavor
Lettuce (head)	Ithaca	Midseason	Heavy	Less susceptible to tipburn than other varieties
	Great Lakes 659	Late	Heavy	Tolerates more cold than other varieties
(butterhead)	Buttercrunch	Early	Good	Excellent quality, withstands some frost; long season of use
(looseleaf)	Salad Bowl	Early	Good	Does not go to seed as early as other varieties
	Grand Rapids	Early	Heavy	Best adapted to low light intensities
Onion (sets)	Ebenezer	Early	Good	Yellowish flesh, very mild, stores well; Park Seed Co.
	White Portugal	Earliest	Good	White flesh, mild; Heirloom Seeds
(bunching)	Evergreen Bunching	Early	Good	Bulb area enlarges more than others; Burpee
Parsley	Curlina	Midseason	Good	Suitable for garden or indoor culture; Stokes Seeds
Parsnip	Hollow Crown	Late	Good	May be left in garden if winter is mild
Green Peas	Spring	Earliest	Good	10-day picking period, trellising not necessary; Stokes Seeds
	Sparkle	Early	Heavy	8-day picking period, trellising not necessary; E & R Seed
	Dwarf Gray Sugar	Early	Good	Flat edible pod pea, trellising not necessary
	Alaska	Early and continuous	Good	Small pod, small pea, light color
	Freezonian	Early and continuous	Heavy	Continuous but only a few at a time, must trellis
	Sugar Ann	Early	Good	Plump edible pod, trellising not necessary
	Progress No. 9	Midseason	Heavy	Trellising is desirable; Burpee, Seedway, Inc.
	Green Arrow	Midseason	Heavy	Continuous, trellising not necessary
	Sugar Snap	Late	Fair	Plump edible pod, trellising is desirable

Vegetable	Variety	Maturity	Yields	Comments
Potato	Alaska Red	Early	Heavy	Red skin; seed potatoes are uniform shape for market gardening; available from many Alaska nurseries and garden supply stores
	Allagash Russet	Midseason to late	Heavy	Round tuber, medium to heavy russetting
	Kennebec	Early	Very heavy	Plant space 7–9 inches, tubers green quickly when exposed to light
	Alasclear	Early	Good	Very resistant to common scab
	Superior	Early	Good	Heavy yield when irrigated; to reduce disease problems, be sure to purchase certified seed
	Shepody	Midseason to late	Heavy	Long white, high dry matter, large size
	Alaska Frostless	Midseason to late	Good	Grows after others are killed by frost
	Denali	Midseason to late	Good	Baking and chipping quality
	Alaska 114	Midseason to late	Good	Tough white skin
	IditaRed	Midseason	Very heavy	Tough red skin
	Green Mountain	Midseason to late	Very heavy	Widely adapted, tender skin, boiler
	Bake King	Midseason to late	Heavy	Uniform tuber shape, good baker
	Highlat Russet	Midseason to late	Good	Good texture and flavor when baked
	Yukon Gold	Midseason to late	Good	Good quality, yellow flesh
	Butte	Midseason to late	Good	Long tuber shape
	Lemhi Russet	Midseason to late	Good	Long tuber shape, baker
Pumpkin	Spirit	Late	Good	May mature if transplanted through polyethelene film
	Autumn Gold	Late	Good	Turns from yellow to deep orange
Radish	Cherry Belle	Early	Good	Small top, round root, crisp
	Burpee White	Early	Good	Tender, mild and crisp; Burpee
	Chinese White	Midseason	Heavy	Long, large diameter, good for winter storage
	Champion	Second earliest	Heavy	Uniform root, good quality
Rhubarb	<i>Many varieties perform well; available from various Alaska nurseries and national mail order sources</i>			
	MacDonald	Early	Heavy	Cooks red, high quality
	Victoria	Later	Heavy	Green stalks with red speckling
	Canada Red		Moderate	Smaller but tender red stalks
	Prince Albert	Early	Heavy	Can become impressively large with proper fertilization
Spinach	Melody	Very early	Good	Excellent quality, resists early bolting
Squash (summer)	Gold Rush	Early	Good	Slender, gold colored
	Elite	Early	Heavy	Dark green zucchini; Harris Seeds, Johnny's Seeds
	Black Jack	Second earliest	Good	Produces over a long period
	Greyzini	Second earliest	Good	Light green, slender; Stokes Seeds
	Aristocrat	Early	Good	Excellent quality; Thompson & Morgan
	(winter) Gold Nugget	Late	Fair	Small fruit; Johnny's Seeds, Reimer Seeds, Territorial Seeds, Ed Hume Seeds

Vegetable	Variety	Maturity	Yields	Comments
	Sweet Mama	Late	Fair	Buttercup type, compact vines
	Golden Hubbard	Late	Good	Long fruit
	Improved Hubbard	Late	Good	Thick flesh, dark green
	Spaghetti squash	Midseason	Heavy	Novelty squash
	Sweet meat	Late	Good	Short blue, hubbard type
Sweet Corn	<i>Growing season must be extended by growing with clear polyethene</i>			
	Polar Vee	Early	Very good	Short cob, short plant
	Earlievee	Early	Good	Excellent quality

Vegetable Varieties Suitable for Greenhouse or High Tunnel Production

Vegetable	Variety	Maturity	Yields	Comments
Tomato	Subartic 25	Early	Fair	Good ripe fruits; Denali Seed Co.
(Outdoors)	Early Tanana	Early	Poor	Several fruits mature per plant; Denali Seed Co.
Turnip	Tokyo Cross	Very early	Fair	May bolt to seed
	Purple Top White Globe	Midseason	Heavy	Mild flavor
Cucumbers	Lemon	Late	Fair	Small yellow-skin cukes, good flavor
	Straight 8	Intermediate	Fair	Excellent fresh eating and pickling
	Tasty Green Hybrid (formerly Burpless)	Intermediate	Good	Good flavor; one of the first good burpless cukes; Burpee
Sweet Corn	<i>Growing season must be extended by growing with clear polyethene</i>			
Tomato	Tropic	Early	Heavy	Desirable for hydroponics
	Vendor	Early	Heavy	Short vine; good for lower ceiling houses
	Early Girl	Very early	Heavy	Good resistance to gray mold
	Ultra Girl	Early	Heavy	Attractive fruit; Stokes Seeds

Small Fruits

Fruit	Variety	Maturity	Yields	Comments
Strawberries	Matared	Very early	Heavy	Deep red fruit, excellent quality, winter hardy if mulched; various Alaska nurseries
	Susitna	Midseason	Heavy	Deep red fruit, excellent quality, winter hardy if mulched
	Pioneer	Earliest	Low	Low quality, prolific plant maker, frequently survives without mulch
	Skwentna	Midseason	Good	Medium red, distinctive flavor, excellent frozen

Fruit	Variety	Maturity	Yields	Comments
Raspberry	Latham	Early	Good	Excellent quality and flavor; various Alaska nurseries
	Festival	Midseason to late	Good	Large fruits
	Boyne	Early	Good	Excellent quality and flavor
	Reveille	Midseason to late	Good	Excellent quality and flavor
	Indian Summer	Midseason to late	Good	Excellent quality with mild flavor
	Kiska	Early to midseason	Good	Very hardy, small fruit
	Titan	Midseason	heavy	Large fruits, mild flavor, hardy to -15°F
	Golden Amber	Midseason	Good	Yellow fruit
Gooseberry	Pixwell	Late	Fair	More winter hardy than Champion
Currant	Red Lake	Late	Heavy	Very large fruits and seeds; various Alaska nurseries
	Holland Longbunch	Midseason	Good	Large fruits, reliably hardy
	Stevens #9	Late	Heavy	Large fruits, medium-sized seeds
	Boskoop Giant	Midseason to late	Heavy	Large fruits, excellent quality
	Swedish Black	Late	Heavy	Large fruits, excellent quality

Tree Fruits

Fruit	Variety	Maturity	Yields	Variety Comments	Sources
Apple	Chinese Golden Early	Very early	Fair	Sweet, pleasant flavor, ripens in late August; various Alaska nurseries	
	Rescue	Early	Heavy	Crisp, juicy, small red fruit, sprightly, ripens early September	
	Yellow Transparent	Midfall	Good	High quality, for eating and culinary uses	
	Summer Red	Midfall	Good	Crisp, juicy red fruit, sprightly, ripens late September	
Crab Apple	Quality	Late	Good	Small yellow fruit, astringent flavor, good preserving; various Alaska nurseries	
	Jacques	Late	Fair	Firm, yellowish red; remove calyx and bake whole	

Notes on shipping plant material: Contrary to the statements of some national plant vendors, plant material can be sent to Alaska. As for all interstate shipping of living plants, the material must have passed a USDA phytosanitary inspection. The phytosanitary certificate should be available upon request. It is also important that the material won't freeze during shipment. These logistics can be worked out with your shipper.

SEED SOURCES

Alberta Nurseries & Seeds Ltd.	P.O. Box 446, Bowden, Alberta T0M 0K0, Canada; www.gardenersweb.ca
Ball Seed Company	P.O. Box 335, West Chicago, IL 60185; www.ballseed.com
Burgess Seed and Plant Co.	905 Four Seasons Rd., Bloomington IL 61701; www.eburgess.com/burgess
W. Atlee Burpee & Co.	300 Park Ave., Warminster, PA 18974; www.burpee.com
Cook's Garden	P.O. Box C5030, Warminster, PA 18974; www.cooksgarden.com
Denali Seed Co.	P.O. Box 111425, Anchorage, AK 99511-1425; www.denaliseed.com
D.V. Burrell Seed Growers Co.	P.O. Box 150, Rocky Ford, CO 81067; www.burrellseeds.us
E & R Seed	1356 E 200 S, Monroe, IN 46772; 206-692-6827
Ed Hume Seeds	P.O. Box 73160, Puyallup, WA 98373; www.humeseeds.com
Farmer Seed & Nursery Co.	818 NW 4th Street, Faribault, MN 55021; www.farmerseed.com
Ferry-Morse Seed Co.	601 Stephen Beale Dr., Fulton, KY 42041; www.ferry-morse.com
Gourmet Seeds International, LLC	HC 12 Box 510, Tatum, NM 88267; www.gourmetseed.com
Gurney's Seed & Nursery Co.	P.O. Box 4178, Greendale, IN 47025-4178; http://gurneys.com
Harris Seeds	P.O. Box 24966, Rochester, NY 14624-0966; www.harriseseeds.com
Hydro-Gardens Inc.	P.O. Box 25845, Colorado Springs, CO 80936; www.hydro-gardens.com
Irish Eyes Garden City Seeds	5045 Robinson Canyon Rd., Ellensburg, WA 98926; www.irisheyesgardenseeds.com
Johnny's Selected Seeds	955 Benton Ave. Winslow, ME 04901; www.johnnyseeds.com
Kitchen Garden Seeds	P.O. Box 638, Bantam, CT 06750, www.kitchengardenseeds.com
Nature Hills Nursery	9910 North 48th Street Ste. 200, Omaha, NE 68152-1548; www.naturehills.com
Park Seed Co.	1 Parkton Ave. Greenwood, SC 29647; www.parkseed.com
Reimer Seeds	P.O. Box 236, Mount Holly, NC 28120, www.reimerseeds.com
Seedway, Inc.	99 Industrial Road, Elizabethtown, PA 17022; www.seedway.com
Seeds of Change	c/o Marketing Concepts, P.O. Box 152 Spicer, MN 56288; www.seedsofchange.com
Stokes Seeds Inc.	P.O. Box 548, Buffalo, NY 14240-0548; stokes@stokeseeds.com
Tomato Growers	P.O. Box 60015, Fort Myers, FL 33906; www.tomatogrowers.com
Thompson & Morgan	P.O. Box 4086, Lawrenceburg, IN 47025; www.tmseeds.com
Territorial Seed Co.	P.O. Box 158, Cottage Grove, OR 97424-0061; www.territorialseed.com
T & T Seeds, Ltd.	Box 17100, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3P6, Canada; www.ttseeds.com
Otis S. Twilley Seed Co., Inc.	121 Gary Rd., Hodges, SC 29653; www.twilleyseed.com
Vesey's Seeds, Ltd.	P.O. Box 9000, Calais, ME, 04619-602; www.veseys.com
Vermont Bean Seed Co.	334 West Stroud St., Randolph, WI 53956-1274; www.vermontbean.com

To simplify information, trade names of products have been used. No endorsement of named products by the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products that are not mentioned.

For more information, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service office or Jeff Smeenck, Extension Horticulture Specialist, at 907-746-9470 or jeff.smeenck@alaska.edu. This publication was originally written by Wayne Vandre and Donald E. Carling, Horticulture Specialists, in 1984. Revised by Jeff Smeenck in April 2010.

**Visit the Cooperative Extension Service website at
www.uaf.edu/ces or call 1-877-520-5211**